



# COUNTY OF ORANGE HEALTH CARE AGENCY

## PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

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### Invasive Pneumococcal Disease and Varicella (chickenpox) Reportable in Orange County

Invasive pneumococcal disease (IPD) is a major cause of pneumonia and meningitis in the United States. Increasing resistance of *S. pneumoniae* to antibiotics in the last decade is a serious public health concern. In addition, it is important to monitor IPD to continuously assess the effectiveness of the two vaccines now available, one for children less than 5 years of age and one for older adults and persons with certain underlying conditions. The Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists has recommended the implementation of IPD surveillance to raise awareness of vaccine recommendations, identify areas or populations in which vaccine use is sub-optimal, and monitor implementation of pneumococcal vaccine programs. In addition, monitoring the antibiotic resistance patterns of *S. pneumoniae* isolates in Orange County can provide important information to clinicians.

The California Department of Health Services made varicella deaths reportable in California in 2002. With the introduction and widespread use of the varicella vaccine, it is important to monitor varicella deaths as a marker of the effectiveness of vaccination policies. The decrease in number of varicella infections makes monitoring of hospital admissions, in addition to deaths, feasible. These data will provide more useful information than deaths alone. In addition, smallpox, especially in its early stages, may be mistaken for varicella infection—reporting of severe cases may help to detect a bioterrorist attack using smallpox.

**Therefore, as the Health Officer of Orange County, California, under the authority provided in Health and Safety Code, Section 120175\*, I hereby make reportable, effective immediately:**

- 1) Invasive infection due to *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (invasive pneumococcal disease), defined as *S. pneumoniae* isolated from a normally sterile site (e.g., cerebrospinal fluid, blood, joint fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, other), and**
- 2) Hospital admissions due to varicella (chickenpox)**

Mark B. Horton, MD, MSPH  
Health Officer

August 5, 2003

Date

\* Each health officer knowing or having reason to believe that any case of the diseases made reportable by regulation of the department, or any other contagious, infectious or communicable disease exists, or has recently existed, within the territory under his or her jurisdiction, shall take measures as may be necessary to prevent the spread of the disease or occurrence of additional cases.